

Sunday, March 29



Monday, March 30



Tuesday, March 31



Wednesday, April 1



“
As bad as some of the press was in this whole thing, I also have to say that I think the press had a very positive part in it because we have received tons of mail from school children ... writing because they were sad and they were scared. And who knows how many children it may have made stop and think about it.

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— Suzann Wilson,
mother of slain victim Britthney Varner, 11

munitywide memorial and healing service, the full text of the governor's support message and the spread of the white bows and ribbons. One story tells how sometimes competitive police agencies had cooperated. Others, without fawning, describe how smoothly the three ambulance services had coordinated and how well the local hospital and its doctors and nurses had performed. One inside story lists more than 20 bake sales, suppers, fish fries, auctions, raffles, songfests and other similar events being planned or held to benefit the victims. Each is fully detailed. Some might question the legitimacy of giving substantial space to such minor events. But, individually and collectively, this is the story of what the people of Jonesboro were doing as they went about coping and there is little doubt that they thought it was newsworthy. There also is a detailed story reporting that most students were going back to Westside and that efforts were under way to return the school to a normal schedule as soon as possible.

Troutt's second editorial, headlined "Humanity" and reflecting on the hundreds of messages of sympathy pouring into Jonesboro, appears today. It describes how the shootings, tragic as they were, had connected the world to Jonesboro and demonstrated how interrelated we all are. There also is a half-page of letters on the shootings, most of them expressing shock, grief and sympathy.

March 28

The lead story describes the funeral of two girls. It runs for more than 40 inches, quotes the minister's remarks extensively, and is accompanied by two poignant photos of mourners.

The newspaper also publishes detailed, separate obituaries on each

girl. Other stories include coverage of the continuing police investigation, interviews with newly discovered witnesses, clarification that police were sure no other shooters were involved, updates on the wounded, more on tributes and memorials, and details on the work of the more than 100 social workers engaged in the counseling effort.

There also is the first story of resident complaints of frenzied, aggressive and intrusive behavior by some outside journalists. Troutt's editorial is headlined "Changed." It ends: "Jonesboro and Craighead County are wonderful places inhabited by some of the finest people to be found anywhere. But there are those among us who are troubled and have severe personal problems. We can help by listening and lending a helping hand. If we have learned anything from this horrible tragedy, it is that we must be kind to each other."

March 29

The lead story is on the funerals of the other two girls and the teacher who was killed. The banner headline says, "Final homage is paid to last of five victims." There are extensive quotes from the ministers' remarks, the psalms read and the hymns sung, and several large color photos of grieving mourners. Other stories: The ex-girlfriend, 11, of one of the suspects is interviewed on how she stopped being his girlfriend after only three days because she "knew he was trouble." President Clinton's radio address is about seeking answers to the shooting. Clinton will address the "Service for Hope and Healing" scheduled for next Tuesday. Interviews with recovering students and the husband of a seriously wounded teacher are featured. A Page 1B guest column by a Little Rock TV journalist is headlined "Sadness in city is incredible." The editorial headline is "Responding."

March 30

The lead story explains the Arkansas juvenile-law system and how it will determine the fate of the two suspects. A lengthy sidebar details the daily routine of the boys in the juvenile detention center, their schedule, their meals, their

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